

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

In response to the Office Action mailed August 14, 2007, the Examiner's claim rejections have been considered. Claims 1, 3-4, 8-16, 18-20, and 23-36 are pending. Claims 2, 5-7, 17, and 21-22 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 1 and 16 have been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claims 6 and 21, respectively. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 16 as well as their dependent claims 3-4, 8-15, 18-20, and 23-30, respectively, are now allowable. Claim 31 has been amended, and claims 32-36 have been added. Support for the claim amendments and the new claims is found, at a minimum, on page 4, lines 12-15; and page 5, line 29 – page 6, line 14. No new matter has been added. Applicant respectfully traverses all rejections regarding all pending claims and earnestly solicits allowance of these claims.

1. Interview Summary

Applicant's representative conducted a telephonic Examiner interview on October 18, 2007 with Examiners Rada and Coburn. Proposed claims submitted by the Applicant's representative were discussed in view of Poole. More specifically, Applicant's representative explained that Poole did not disclose the selection of currently spinning reels to form a subset of reels that is used to determine a game outcome. The Examiners agreed that this distinction appeared to overcome the Poole reference and advanced the prosecution of the case. However, no agreement as to the allowance of the proposed claims was reached.

2. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-4, 5-16 and 18-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Poole (US 6,375,570). Claims 5-7 and 21-22 have been canceled thereby rendering the rejection moot. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection with respect to the remaining claims. With respect to independent claims 1 and 16, Applicant has amended these claims to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claims 6 and 21, respectively. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 3-4, 5-16 and 18-30 are now allowable.

With respect to claim 31, Applicant respectfully submits that Poole does not render the claimed invention obvious because Poole does not disclose “selecting a subset of the currently spinning reels” and “juxtapositioning the subset of spinning reels...before stopping the subset of the currently spinning reels.” Applicant respectfully submits that Poole does not disclose the selection of a subset of reels. Rather, Poole merely discloses that all the reels of the game are active (i.e., all the reels are used to determine a game outcome). Additionally, Applicant respectfully submits that Poole does not disclose the juxtapositioning of the subset of currently spinning reels. Rather, Poole merely discloses that the middle three reels shake in response to a triggering event (See, Col. 3, lines 15-23). Applicant respectfully submits that the shaking disclosed in Poole is merely an entertainment sequence. There is no movement of the reels from one location to another to fill any voids. In sharp contrast, according to the claimed embodiment, the juxtapositioning of the spinning reels involves moving the spinning reels laterally to eliminate any non-contiguous space between the reels. Because Poole fails to disclose all the claimed elements, Applicant submits that claim 31 is not obvious in view of Poole.

In conclusion, Applicant respectfully submits that the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection to claims 1, 3-4, 5-16 and 18-31 have been overcome.

3. New Claims 32-36

Applicant respectfully submits that new claims 32-36 are allowable over the cited references for at least the reasons set forth in Section 2 of this response.

CONCLUSION

Applicant has made an earnest and *bona fide* effort to clarify the issues before the Examiner and to place this case in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of all of claims 1, 3-4, 8-16, 18-20, and 23-36 is believed to be in order, and a timely Notice of Allowance to this effect is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fees indicated in the Fee Transmittal, any additional fee(s) or underpayment of fee(s) under 37 CFR 1.16 and 1.17, or to credit any overpayments, to Deposit Account No. 194293, Deposit Account Name STEPTOE & JOHNSON LLP.

Should the Examiner have any questions concerning the foregoing, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at (310) 734-3200. The undersigned attorney can normally be reached Monday through Friday from about 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM Pacific Time.

Respectfully submitted,

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